



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

NEWS RELEASE

SNAKE RIVER FISH AND WILDLIFE OFFICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SCIENTIFIC AND COMMERCIAL INFORMATION SOUGHT FOR MACFARLANE'S FOUR-O'CLOCK

Submissions accepted until close of business June 23, 2006

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is initiating a five-year status review of MacFarlane's four-o'clock (*Mirabilis macfarlanei*), a plant that is listed as threatened on the List of Threatened and Endangered Species (List). The plant is found in Idaho County, Idaho, and portions of the Snake, Salmon, and Imnaha River canyons in northeast Wallowa County, Oregon.

The MacFarlane's four-o'clock was originally listed as endangered in 1979. Additional populations of the plant were discovered and some populations on federal lands received active monitoring and conservation actions. As a result of those recovery efforts, the plant was downlisted to threatened in 1996.

Periodic status reviews of all listed species are required by the Endangered Species Act (ESA) at least once every five years to determine whether a species' classification as threatened or endangered is still appropriate. A five-year review is based on the best scientific and commercial data available at the time of the review. If the Service's analysis of the new information produced since the time of listing is not consistent with the current classification of the species, the Service may determine that a change in the species' federal classification is appropriate. This species could be recommended for reclassification from threatened to endangered (uplisting) or for removal from the List (delisting).

Any recommended change in classification would be subject to a separate rule-making process that includes opportunities for public and peer review and comment. No change in status would occur until the completion of that process. If no change in classification is recommended, the species would remain under its current listing status.

The Service is requesting new scientific or commercial information from the public that has become available since the 1996 reclassification of MacFarlane's four-o'clock. Such information may include, but is not limited to, species biology; population trends, distribution, abundance, demographics, and genetics; habitat conditions (amount, distribution, and suitability); conservation measures that have been implemented that benefit the species; threat status and trends; and other new information, data, or corrections such as taxonomic or nomenclature changes, identification of erroneous information, and improved analytical methods. Information will be accepted until close of business June 23, 2006.

Jeff Foss, Field Supervisor of the Service's Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office said, "Our goal is to obtain the most accurate and up-to-date information on MacFarlane's four-o'clock. This information will help us conduct a thorough five-year review of this species to ensure its listing classification is accurate."

Information may be submitted in writing to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Room 368, Boise, Idaho 83709. Comments may also be faxed to 208-378-5262, or e-mailed to fw1srbocomment@fws.gov. Please include "Mirabilis 5-year Review" in the subject line for faxes and e-mails. If our internet connection is disrupted, please submit information by mail or fax to the office above.

For further information, please contact Susan Burch at 208-378-5243.

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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